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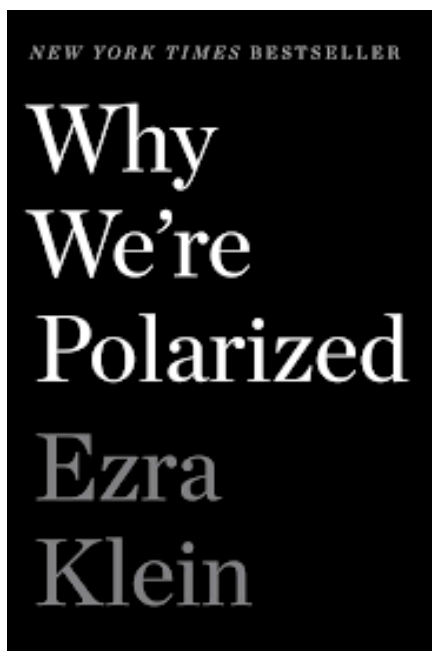
## EZRA KLEIN

### *WHY WE'RE POLARIZED*

Disagree Better Book Club  
Discussion Guide

## About This Selection

Ezra Klein's *Why We're Polarized* was the Disagree Better Book Club selection for February 2024. Klein is the founder of Vox, an influential website of explanatory journalism.



## Discussion Questions

- In *Why We're Polarized*, Ezra Klein argues that polarization is not just about disagreement, but about identity. Do you agree with this assessment? How does this understanding change the way we think about political divisions?
- Klein discusses how social media and other technologies have exacerbated polarization. In what ways do you see these platforms contributing to polarization in your own life or society at large?
- Klein suggests that our political identities are often shaped by group dynamics and social influences rather than rational analysis of policy issues. How does this perspective challenge traditional views of political decision-making? Does Klein's explanation help to explain political divisions within the contemporary United States?

## Discussion Questions Continued

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- One of Klein's key points is that polarization is not a result of individual failings but rather systemic forces. How might acknowledging this shift our approach to addressing political polarization?
- Klein explores the role of tribalism in driving polarization, where individuals prioritize loyalty to their group over objective truth or compromise. How can we foster a greater sense of civic responsibility and shared identity beyond partisan lines?
- Klein discusses the historical roots of polarization in American politics, dating back to the Civil Rights era and beyond. How do you see the legacies of past political conflicts shaping current patterns of polarization?
- Klein explores the role of political elites and media in driving polarization. Do you think they have a responsibility to mitigate polarization, and if so, how might they do so effectively?
- Klein argues that media fragmentation has contributed to polarization by allowing individuals to self-select into echo chambers. How might we encourage more diverse media consumption habits to mitigate this effect?
- Klein discusses the concept of "negative partisanship," where individuals are motivated more by animosity toward the opposing party than by support for their own. How might we shift political discourse away from demonizing the other side and toward constructive dialogue and cooperation?
- Klein suggests that political parties have become more homogeneous over time. How does this affect their ability to govern effectively and represent diverse interests?
- Klein argues that demographic and geographic sorting contribute to polarization. How might policies addressing these factors help reduce polarization?
- Klein explores the psychological factors that contribute to polarization, such as motivated reasoning and cognitive bias. How might we mitigate these factors in ourselves and in society as a whole?
- Klein discusses the possibility of depolarization. What strategies or changes would need to occur for depolarization to become a reality?